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X.—A GROUPING OF FIGURES OF SPEECH, BASED UPON THE PRINCIPLE OF THEIR EFFECTIVENESS.

Four years ago I read before this Association a paper upon a single figure of speech,—allegory. In order to make a careful study of that figure, it was necessary to give some attention to other figures, especially to these three,—simile, metaphor, and personification. From time to time during the last four years I have followed up trains of thought that were opened by my earlier study, and thus have been led almost unconsciously to note the various relations of the more important figures, until I have come to feel that the best way to arrive at an understanding of any one figure is to study figurative language as a whole as well as in its parts.¹ Each year the subject has been brought anew to my mind by the necessity of presenting it in the class-room.

The college student ordinarily comes to us with very little knowledge of the figures of speech. He can, indeed, recognize in a mechanical way certain figures, and can label them with names; but of their real nature, of the principle of which they are manifestations, he knows very little. In his own writing he either makes a lavish use of them for the sake of ornament, or more commonly through a feeling of timidity tries to avoid them. Avoid them altogether he cannot. As regards the use of figures, we should, in my judgment, attempt little more than to point out illustrations of their use, both appropriate and

¹ This paper is intended to supplement and in part to supersede the earlier paper, which appeared in the *Publications* of the Association for 1889. It restates and reinforces the theory of the earlier paper. Certain errors in detail which do not affect the truth of the main thesis, I need not specify; one sentence, however, that beginning "Personification addresses itself" (p. 189; p. 49 of the reprint) I wish to cancel as entirely inadequate, and in part incorrect. At the time of writing the sentence I must have had in mind merely alphabetic personification.

inappropriate ; if this can be done in the student's own writing, his gain will be the greater. For acquiring an apt use of figures the best means that I know is vigorous thinking ; and this we may secure in the student by leading him to write upon subjects in which he takes a genuine interest. I sometimes counsel my pupils not to say to themselves, "Go to, now, I will use a figure ;" but to think hard, and there will come to them such figures as it will be wise for them to use.

Our problem, then, is not primarily to teach the use of figures of speech ; rather it is to teach the student to distinguish that which is essential to each figure, to understand, if possible, the principle of their effectiveness, and to recognize in the various figures various manifestations of this one underlying principle. How shall I present this subject to my class in such a manner as will be profitable to them ? is the question that I have put to myself from year to year : and my answer to the question is an attempt, first, to discover a principle of which every figure is a manifestation in some form ; and, secondly, to devise a grouping which shall be based upon this principle. To my presentation of the subject I give the modest name of grouping, for I do not attempt anything so ambitious or so scientific as a classification of figures ; yet I am not without the hope that it may be possible to convert into something scientific enough to merit the name of classification the presentation which I have found to be effective in the class-room. To this end I shall welcome the closest criticism, especially of those who have had brought home to them the problem of presenting the subject in the class-room.

Upon a subject that has been discussed since the days of Aristotle, it is impossible to say much that is new ; indeed, the more I read, the more I am inclined to think that very little that is new has been said since the time of Quintilian. I must ask for my reader's patience, as I traverse ground that is familiar ; though we come late in the day, and though our strength is feeble, yet there may be for us some scanty gleanings. In *Modern Language Notes* for December, 1886, appeared an

article by Professor Bradley of the University of California, upon "The Classification of Rhetorical Figures;" in the closing sentence of his article the writer says that the object of his paper is to elicit future discussion, and expresses the hope that such discussion "may lead to a lasting reorganization of this central department of Rhetoric." Two years later (December, 1888) appeared in the same periodical an article on "The Evolution of Figures of Speech," by Professor Fruit of Bethel College; but it cannot be said that there has been an active discussion of the subject, or that any definite steps have been taken toward a lasting reorganization. To the above-named writers, and also to Professor Gummere, I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness for help and stimulus, even where I find it necessary to differ with them.

In a useful series of topics and references upon *The Principles of Style*, compiled by Professor Scott of the University of Michigan, the writer supplements his references upon "Figures" with the following words:—"While much good ink has been spilled in discussing the proper classification of Figures, little light has been thrown upon their origin or the principle of their effectiveness" (p. 25). If it were possible to agree upon the principle of their effectiveness, it might be an easier matter to agree upon a classification,—at least, upon a classification that would answer for practical purposes. Into the origin of figures I shall not attempt to inquire, beyond raising the question whether it may not be found by a study of human nature quite as readily as by an historical study. Undoubtedly, certain nationalities and certain types of character have shown a predilection for certain figures, and these nationalities and types of character have interacted; in the matter of literary form the English literature has, perhaps, borrowed more than it has invented. Readily admitting this, and further admitting that it is in the early stages of a literature that we find especially prominent those traits which are most distinctly national, I would, nevertheless, maintain that any civilization, if it could have an independent growth, would in time develop all, or

nearly all, the literary devices that are in common use. One who has observed attentively the unstudied language of children, can have little doubt upon this point. Is it just to claim that the origin of figures, or of a particular figure, belongs solely to one nation, merely because that nation was among the first to develop a literature? If the calculus could be discovered almost simultaneously by two men, if gunpowder could be invented in two nations many thousand miles apart, what shall hinder us from believing that so distinctive a trait of human nature as the use of figurative language may not have had, may not have, a manifold origin?

In his *Introduction to Aristotle's Rhetoric* (published in 1867), Mr. Cope uses the following words, based upon a passage in the *De Oratore* of Cicero (III, xxxviii, 155):—"The origin of metaphor is the imperfection of language; where there is no term directly expressing a notion, the nearest analogy, the term which expresses that which most nearly resembles it must be employed as a substitute." Poverty of language is, then, the origin of the most important of figures. A different view is taken by Professor Gummere, who says that "a confusion, or if one will, flexibility of terms is the real origin of the metaphor" (*The Anglo-Saxon Metaphor*, p. 11). "Poverty of language" and "a confusion of terms." Must we choose between the two? For myself, I feel free to accept both hypotheses. If, however, I must choose, I prefer the former. "Poverty of language" indicates a struggle with an imperfect medium of communication, and a victory over it, at least in part. "A confusion of terms" indicates an imperfect wit, one that has at its disposal adequate means of expression, but does not know how to make proper use of them, and thus blunders into metaphor. It is impossible to make this last view tally with the saying of Aristotle, that "greatest of all is to be apt at metaphor. This alone cannot be got from another, and is a sign of natural ability ;¹ for to use metaphors well is to discern resemblances"

¹ In his life of Milton, Mark Pattison, whose classical scholarship is unquestioned, has the following sentence (p. 192):—"The power of metaphor, *i. e.*,

(*Poetics*, xxii, 9). I suppose our own observation will lead us to agree that the power of discovering likeness where there is apparent unlikeness is a sign of natural ability; that the power of forcing words to do more work than they are in the habit of doing is a sign of natural ability; and that to confuse two terms, when one of them is capable of doing the work satisfactorily, is a sign of a lack of natural ability. If the origin of metaphor lies in the poverty of language, then it is evident that there is no special need of looking to primitive man for its origin. The same need which men feel to-day, probably a greater need, was felt by primitive man; wherever the need arises, quick wits bend language, and make it serve their purpose. In this sense the origin of metaphor, the most important figure, lies about us, as well as with primitive man.

One of the precepts which the teacher of Rhetoric has frequent occasion to inculcate, is that it is usually better to employ specific words, such as, "bricks and mortar," "hammer and saw," than to use general terms, such as "building materials" and "carpenters' tools." This precept is based upon the principle that the specific word is exact, and therefore clear and vigorous, while the general term expresses the meaning vaguely,

of indirect expression, is, according to Aristotle, the characteristic of genius." The reference is undoubtedly to the passage in the *Poetics* quoted above. Whately, in his *Rhetoric* translates the same passage by the words "a mark of genius." I question whether the foregoing translations do not attribute to Aristotle's words,—*εὐφύιας σημείον*,—more meaning than they will bear. On the other hand, Wharton's translation, "a proof of cleverness," seems to understate the force of the original. Several eminent classical scholars have been so kind as to give me more exact translations of the passage. Two suggested independently "natural ability;" this rendering, which I have adopted, is also employed by Cope. Another suggests that "happy natural endowment" succeeds better in preserving the significance of the first part of the compound in *εὐφύια*. Perhaps, however, the word "ability" preserves the force of *εὖ*; if so, I should prefer not to employ three words in order to translate one. George Eliot (*Mill on the Floss*, Bk. II, ch. 1) translates the phrase by "a sign of high intelligence." The natural temptation is to give to the words all the meaning that they will bear.

because it includes more than we mean. Suppose, now, that we say less than we mean; suppose that we say "bricks and mortar" when we mean, not "bricks and mortar" but "building materials." We have crossed the line that separates literal from figurative discourse. We have chosen to suggest our meaning rather than to state it; and we trust to the imagination of the reader to supply what we have failed to state. Take another illustration. In describing the outbreak of a war and the readiness with which patriots obeyed their country's call to arms, an historian might say, "The carpenter dropped his saw and chisel, and the farmer left his plow in the field." This may be merely a statement of literal truth, or it may suggest much more than it affirms. It may suggest that the carpenter left all his tools, and that the farmer left not only his plow but also everything else that had to do with his daily work; that they, and many other citizens, left their homes, and all that made home dear to them; and that they did so promptly and unhesitatingly. All this is clear to the understanding, if it is stated in full; of that which is merely suggested, the understanding takes no cognizance. But the writer does not choose to state his meaning in full; out of many possible details he chooses this one, "The farmer left his plow in the field," and trusts to the imagination of his readers to supply all that he has left unsaid. So, too, the words, "Consider the lilies" (quoted by Campbell, also by Professor Hill) may be either literal or figurative, according to the meaning which they were intended to convey. I have dwelt thus at length upon this point because I wish to emphasize the fact that the figure which goes by the name of synecdoche stands at only a slight remove from literal language. A touch of imagination in the mind of the writer, if only it be of the kind that compels a response in the mind of the reader, and that which is literal is converted into figure. If this be true, we have here the differentia between the literal and the figurative. Indeed, I would ask whether any other suggestions that may be made are not in reality various names

for this single differentia,—the presence of imagination in the speaker or writer, kindling a response in the hearer or reader.

Synecdoche, as Professor Gummere has said, is based upon a relation of space,—what Professor Fruit has termed intra-relativity,—the relation of the whole and its parts; from this figure it is only a short step to Metonymy, which is based upon a relation of thought,—what Professor Fruit has termed extra-relativity, or the intuitions of necessary relation. Metonymy names things at a slight remove; instead of naming the thing itself, it names something associated with it, and trusts to the imagination to supply what is not stated,—both the thing unnamed and the relation which bridges the gulf between the two. If the relations are necessary relations, the gulf is not a very wide one; neither in synecdoche nor in metonymy is a serious demand made upon the imagination, though more is, perhaps, required in the case of metonymy.

From Metonymy (a change of name) it is only a step to the descriptive epithet or Kenning, as when we call bank notes green-backs; hornets, yellow-jackets; English soldiers, red-coats; a thief, a pickpocket. The examples that I have given point in the direction of metonymy; but literature, poetry especially, abounds in Kenningar that point in the direction of metaphor.¹ In his short poem, "The Humble-bee," Emerson speaks in the first line of the "burly, dozing humble-bee," but after that names him only by means of Kenningar;—"thou animated torrid zone,"—"Zigzag steerer, desert

¹ See the first paragraph of Charles Lamb's essay on "Poor Relations" for an amusing list of descriptive epithets that are not used as Kenningar, though many of them are capable of conversion into Kenningar.

I should like to plead for the introduction into our text-books of the name Kenning. If we can adopt and use with ease Greek words such as Synecdoche, Metonymy, Metaphor, which even to most of those who use them are mere names, surely we can adopt a word which is much more nearly English, and which is already known to students of Old English. Epithet (a Greek word) is not so good a name as Kenning; and it is possible to give to the latter word a definite meaning. The word, if anglicized, would naturally receive an English plural.

cheerer,"—"Hot midsummer's petted crone,"—yellow-breeched philosopher;" and in a sudden burst of imagination he has six Kenningar, completely filling as many consecutive lines,—

"Insect lover of the sun,
Joy of thy dominion!
Sailor of the atmosphere;
Swimmer through the waves of air;
Voyager of light and noon;
Epicurean of June."

The figures that we have been considering,—Synecdoche, Metonymy, and the Kenning,—are various forms of specific language, of choosing one part or feature to represent the whole. They stimulate the imagination, but they cannot be said to stimulate it to a high degree. These are figures that might be used by writers who have only a moderate degree of imaginative power, but who have in a high degree clearness of mental vision, which is, indeed, one form of imagination. I pass now to a group of figures which make larger demands upon the imagination. Their essential nature is that they point out a likeness between two things that to the careless observer offer no suggestion of likeness; the imagination is stimulated to penetrate beneath the surface, and where there is apparent dissimilarity to detect a resemblance.

"How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world."

The simile is a formal, leisurely figure, which sets side by side with equal prominence the two objects compared. A briefer statement in the form of metaphor may not necessarily indicate greater imaginative power in the writer, but it certainly makes greater demands upon the imagination of the reader. When Bassanio speaks of the "blessed candles of the night," when Banquo says on a dark night, "There's husbandry in heaven: their candles are all out," something has been suppressed; accordingly, something must be supplied. Where

there is not actual suppression of a term, but only an omission of the copula which indicates a formal comparison, we have what Professor Gummere terms the implied simile, as distinguished from the stated simile. With his example I quote also his terminology, both for the sake of clearness, and because I wish to offer certain supplementary suggestions. A simile is a formal comparison between two things, x is like y : in proportion as we suppress one of the terms, our statement will assume the form of metaphor. As long as both x and y are expressed, we have simile; when y only is expressed, we have metaphor. For example, "The sun is like the eye of heaven" is a simile formally stated; "The sun, the eye of heaven," or "The sun is the eye of heaven," is an implied simile; both x and y are expressed, and only the copula is omitted. The likeness is implied, though not formally stated. Now omit x , and we have Shakspere's metaphor, "the eye of heaven." Only y is expressed; x must be supplied by the imagination. We see at once what a step has been taken, and what a large demand is made upon the imagination.

The metaphor makes the imagination do more work, and gives it more pleasure than any other figure that I have named thus far. In all the other figures there is some literal truth, but the very essence of metaphor is that to the literal understanding it is false, while to the imagination it is true.

"Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more!
Macbeth has does murder sleep,' the innocent sleep,
Sleep that knits up the ravell'd sleeve of care,
The death of each day's life, sore labor's bath,
Balm of hurt minds, great nature's second course,
Chief nourisher in life's feast,—"

Murder sleep? labor's bath? balm of hurt minds? death of each day's life? Impossible, says the understanding. True, every word, says the imagination.

The superior effectiveness of metaphor is due in part to its brevity, to the condensed form in which it comes before the

imagination, and compels it to do its work in a trice. A heightened form of metaphor is that which is so instinct with life and vigor that it has been set apart, and named Personification. That which is lifeless is represented as having life. Such personifications indicate a vivid imagination in the writer, and call for a correspondingly vivid imagination in the reader. I quote the passage in which Hamlet rebukes his queen-mother :—¹

“Such an act
That blurs the grace and blush of majesty,
Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose
From the fair forehead of an innocent love
And sets a blister there, makes marriage-vows
As false a dicers’ oaths: O, such a deed
As from the body of contraction plucks
The very soul, and sweet religion makes
A rhapsody of words: heaven’s face doth glow;
Yea, this solidity and compound mass,
With tristful visage, as against the doom,
Is thought-sick at the act.”

How every word quivers with life! Very different is this from those frigid conceits which Coleridge calls “printers’ devils’ personifications,” and which Lowell had in mind when he wrote of “that alphabetic personification which enlivens all such words as Hunger, Solitude, Freedom, by the easy magic of an initial capital.”

“Contented Toil and hospitable Care,
And kind connubial Tenderness, are there;
And Piety with wishes plac’d above,
And steady Loyalty, and faithful Love.”

Such personifications have about as much of life as has a stuffed suit of armor. A personification should be able to stand alone, without the prop of a capital letter; it should conduct itself like a person, and should show by its actions that it has life.

¹ Quoted also by McElroy, *The Structure of English Prose*, p. 240.

One step more, and we reach in the figure known as Allegory the farthest bound ; in the domain of figure the force of imagination can no farther go. Step by step that which is figurative has been displacing that which is literal ; but even in metaphor there is some hint of the literal. When we say "the eye of heaven," the word "heaven" makes it apparent that we are not to take the word "eye" in a literal sense. In genuine allegory all is figure ; there is not a trace of the literal. "The wheel is come full circle," and again, as in the case of synecdoche, we have language that may be either literal or figurative. Every word *may* be taken in a literal sense ; every word is *intended* to be taken in a figurative sense. Under the apparent meaning, as under a veil, is hidden the true meaning ; and only an active imagination can interpret by the folds of drapery the form that is hidden beneath. Metaphor gives us *y* with a hint of *x* ; pure allegory gives us *y* without the barest hint of *x*. It is nothing more or less than a riddle. Of course pure allegory is a tremendous tax upon the imagination, which is obliged at once to solve the riddle, that is, mentally to supply the missing *x*, and to keep up a running series of equations between the expressed *y* and the unexpressed *x*.

The relation between simile, metaphor, and allegory, and the demand that each makes upon the imagination, may be illustrated by means of symbols in another way. Aristotle was, I believe, the first to point out the fact that the metaphor and the simile may be set forth in the terms of a proportion :— "As old age is to life, so is evening to day" (*Poetics*, xxi, 6). This relation we may indicate by the symbols, $A : B :: a : b$. In the formal simile "Old age is like the evening of life," and in the implied simile, "Old age, the evening of life," only the first three terms in the proportion are expressed, and we have $A : B :: a : x$; but it is a simple matter to supply the fourth term of a proportion when the other three are given. The missing term "day" is not needed, for it is as readily supplied as is the omitted member of an enthymeme. Indeed,

the act is one of logical inference rather than of imagination. In the metaphor, "the evening of life," another term of the proportion has been omitted; given the two means, we are to find the extremes. This is a problem which can be answered,—answered in a variety of ways, indeed: perhaps the true answer will reveal itself more readily to the imagination than to the reason. In pure allegory we have only a mention of "evening"; no mention whatever is made of "old age" or of "life" or of "day." One term of the proportion is given, and the imagination must supply the other three; probably it will content itself with supplying two.

As examples of pure allegory I might cite the riddles of Cynewulf, perhaps more interesting as puzzles, both as to meaning and as to authorship, than as literature. As a type of such allegory the mask is better than the veil. If, indeed, pure allegory is merely a riddle,—and much of it is nothing more,—it is certain to fail of being widely interesting. The most successful allegories are those which are the embodiments, not of a conceit, but of a symbolism that is based upon the great truths of human nature and of human experience. They aim, not at mystification, but at setting forth truth in an impressive manner. The form of words in which the truth is clothed bears to the real meaning a relation not unlike that of the body to the soul; and where there is an informing soul within, it will succeed in casting "a beam on the outward shape." For the allegory in its nobler form is of imagination all compact, and will meet with a ready response in the imaginative mind. Examples of such allegory are Clough's "Where lies the land to which the ship would go?"—Tennyson's "Crossing the Bar" and "The Deserted House." Examples of this nobler sort of pure allegory are not numerous, and they are all brief. A long allegory is almost as impossible as a long lyric poem, and for the same reason; in both instances the tax upon the imaginative power of writer and of reader is too great.

Most allegories are examples of what may be called imperfect allegory; some clue to the meaning is given, at the outset, if nowhere else. A good example of such allegory is Mr. Gilder's fine sonnet beginning, "My love for thee doth march like armed men." Nearly all long allegories are imperfect allegories, and this is a mark of wisdom on the part of the writers, for nothing can be more exasperatingly tedious than a long allegory which is continually baffling the reader's attempts to fathom the meaning; such allegories Lowell must have intended, when he spoke of "the mirage of allegory." A long allegory commonly begins with a simile or a metaphor, thus drawing aside a corner of the veil long enough for the reader to gain some clue to what is beneath. So Bunyan gives a clue at the beginning of his great allegory:—"As I walked through the wilderness of this *world*."

The use of allegory in its various forms is a feature of moral and religious teaching that is intended to arrest the attention. The Great Teacher made frequent use of this figure in his parables: usually of imperfect allegory, as in the parable of the ten virgins, beginning with a simile, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom"; or, as in the parable of the vine and the branches, beginning with a metaphor, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman"; rarely he used pure allegory, giving no clue, as in the parable of the sower, "Behold, a sower went forth to sow." It is of this parable, the reader will remember, that "his disciples asked him, saying, What might this parable be?" (Luke viii, 9.) Apparently their imaginations were not equal to the demands of pure allegory.

Because so much of allegory is imperfect, the common understanding of the figure is imperfect. We judge by what we see; for practical purposes our judgment may suffice, but theoretically it is inaccurate. Pure allegory is rarely noticed in text-books on Rhetoric. Some books purposely

make no mention of allegory ; since the figure has very little practical importance, such omission is certainly to be preferred to the catholicity of books which counsel the learner to practise the writing of allegories. Commonly, however, text-books teach without any qualification that allegory is continued metaphor. Professor Bradley draws up an elaborate and interesting classification of about twenty figures ; from their company he calmly excludes allegory, with the remark that it is no more a figure of speech "than is a Novel or an Epic." Such language must certainly be called hasty ; evidently he is thinking of the narrative element and has forgotten that it is not length, but absolute suppression of the literal meaning that constitutes allegory. Theoretically, allegory is *the* figure of speech, for it is *all* figure. I quote Professor Bradley's words:—"Rhetorical Figures—Figures *par excellence*—are forms of speech artfully and significantly varied from what is recognized as the norm of plain speech" (*Modern Language Notes*, December, 1886, col. 281). Could there be a better definition of allegory? According to this definition, is not allegory the figure *par excellence*? Surely of all variations from the norm of plain speech it is the most artful and significant ; so artful, it appears, as to deceive the very elect. So long as allegory can be deliberately excluded from a classification of figures, so long as text-books continue to give definitions that are either incorrect or inadequate, so long it will be necessary to reiterate the statement that allegory is not only a figure of speech, but is more completely a figure, more free from the alloy of the literal, than any other.¹

One word more. Time-honored examples and time-honored consent have allowed the name of allegory to a group of

¹ In order to assure myself that the foregoing paragraph was not superfluous or overstated, before sending it to press I examined with reference to the point under discussion twelve modern rhetorics, from Blair's (1783) to a book published in 1892. Ten of these twelve books give definitions of allegory that are inaccurate ; one (intentionally) gives no definition ; the definition in the twelfth book is correct.

alphabetic personifications, abstract qualities masquerading in the garments of real persons. So long as this can be done with only an occasional protest here and there, it needs to be repeated that a group of statuesque personifications,—or even a group of walking personifications,—placed in a narrative, does not make allegory. The personages of an allegory should reveal themselves, not by their names, but by their actions; and the action should have a twofold meaning, a literal and a figurative. A character named Sansfoy, who acts in a faithless manner, is not an example of allegory in any true sense of the term; for both the name and the actions are to be understood literally.

My aim in this paper must be apparent to every reader. I examined first Synecdoche, the simplest form of figure, that which is at the smallest remove from literal language. By comparing the same form of words, first as literal statement, then as figurative language, I tried to ascertain the differentia between literal and figurative speech; and I found that it is the presence of imagination in the writer calling for imagination in the reader. I then treated the more important figures as forms of imaginative utterance, and found in them a blending in various proportions of literal and of imaginative language. Finally, I have tried to range these figures,—these manifestations of the imagination in varying proportions,—in a series which shall exhibit a constantly decreasing proportion of the literal, and a constantly increasing proportion of the imaginative. I begin my series with synecdoche, the figure which stands nearest to literal speech; and I close it with allegory, which is at the farthest possible remove from the norm of plain speech. And this is my order:—Synecdoche, Metonymy, Stated Simile, Implied Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Imperfect Allegory, Pure Allegory. The Kenning, which points sometimes toward Metonymy, some-

times towards Metaphor, I place between Metonymy and Metaphor.¹

Such a series as I have described will explain the fact that pure allegories are not numerous, that many attempts at pure allegory are failures, and that the successes in pure allegory are almost without exception brief. In fact, allegory is a figure which ought seldom to be used. The other figures from personification down are more serviceable; some admixture of the alloy of literal speech renders them better fitted for circulation. Unless he has something of unusual importance to communicate, unless his own feeling is strong, a writer cannot with propriety expect his readers to place a tension upon the imagination. The accumulation of personifications in a passage already quoted,—Hamlet's speech to his mother,—may be justified by the fact that his mind is wrought up to a high pitch of excitement. He has come for the purpose of rebuking his mother; he has just killed old Polonius, and for a moment thought that he had killed his uncle, the murderer of his father; and with his own mind, as well as that of his mother, keyed up to a high pitch of emotion, he begins his reproof. What wonder that his language reflects the state of his mind? In the same way the exuberance of metaphor in Macbeth's speech uttered immediately after he has mur-

IMAGINATION	
Pure Allegory	
Imperfect Allegory	
Personification	
Metaphor	
Implied Simile	
Stated Simile	
Metonymy	
Synecdoche	
LITERAL STATEMENT	

¹ If the teacher of psychology is ready to avail himself of the help afforded by a graphic presentation of his abstract teaching, surely the teacher of rhetoric, which is in part a branch of aesthetics, need not disdain the use of similar illustrations. For indicating the steadily decreasing proportion of the literal, and the steadily increasing proportion of the imaginative I have found well suited for my purpose the accompanying device, which is sometimes employed by teachers of psychology and of logic.

dered the sleeping Duncan, is justified by the intensity of his feeling.

One objection that may be made to my grouping,—and it is a vital one, if true,—is that the grouping is theoretical, and does not conform to fact; that it is not true that the metaphor as such makes a greater demand upon the imagination than does metonymy; that some instances of metonymy manifest more imagination than do some instances of metaphor. This objection I should answer first by readily admitting its force in single instances, but also reiterating my belief that the concept which we name metaphor connotes a greater degree of imaginative power, a smaller proportion of the alloy of literalism, than does that which we call metonymy. Secondly, I should bring forward the distinction made by Wordsworth and by Coleridge between Imagination and Fancy, and I should assign to the domain of Imagination the figures based upon real relations and resemblances, and to the domain of Fancy the figures, based upon intellectual conceits; in the latter division would belong, also, frigid personifications and artificial allegories. Thus, within their proper domain, the relative positions of the figures would be unaltered.

As this point I must plead guilty to offering my paper under a misnomer. I have not, as my reader knows, been discussing figures, but I have dealt only with tropes. The distinction, which has never been set forth with more clearness than by Quintilian, is an important one.¹ A trope is the turning of a word or phrase from its literal signification to another; while “a figure, as is indicated by its very name,—*figura*,—is a *form* of speech differing from the common and ordinary mode of

¹ Blair (Lecture XIV) says,—“This distinction . . . is of no great use; as nothing can be built upon it in practice; neither is it always very clear.”

President D. J. Hill, in his *Science of Rhetoric* (p. 203), says,—“Quintilian’s distinction between tropes and figures is of no practical value.”

Professor Bain, in his *English Composition and Rhetoric* (Vol. I, p. 135), says,—“The distinction is artificial, and turns on a point that has little relevance to the leading uses of the Figures in Style.”

expression.”¹ A trope gives to a word new meaning ; while a figure is simply a matter of the order of words. Thus, antithesis and inversion are merely arrangements of words within the sentence. Shaping sentences, and giving to words a new significance, are entirely different things, and ought to receive different names. I ought to have had the courage to use in my title the word “tropes,” for it is wholly with tropes that I am dealing. I might have been courageous enough to use the word trope ; but my courage failed me, when I thought of the necessity of making frequent use of the words “tropical” and “tropically.” I should like to plead for a wider use of these words also, so that when we may wish to use them for the sake of precision, it will not be necessary to avoid them because of their oddity.

The study of rhetoric, which, when properly pursued, is nothing less than a study of the means by which great writers have produced their effects, is sometimes spoken of in a depreciatory manner ; those who speak thus must have in mind what is understood by the term mere rhetoric,—fanciful conceits and a juggling with the order of words. The distinction between tropes and figures is the distinction between two orders of writers, between a higher and a lower imagination. This is the distinction between Macaulay and Carlyle. Macaulay is very particular about the order of words ; he is admirably concrete in his choice of words, continually hovering upon the borders of synecdoche ; into the domain of the imagination he seldom advances farther than the simile. Carlyle appears to be careless about the order of words ; but he understands the art of turning them aside from their ordinary meaning, and making them do a vast amount of unaccustomed work. He is at home in the lofty air of metaphor and of vivid personification ; at times he even penetrates and lights up the cloudy regions of allegory.

¹ Quintilian, *Inst. Orator.* ix, 1, 4:—*Figura, sicut nomine ipso patet, conformatio quaedam a communi et primum se offerente ratione.*

Since the publication nearly forty years ago of *The Philosophy of Style* by Herbert Spencer, there has been a gradual consensus of opinion in favor of the view which he advanced,—that the aim of all rhetorical devices is economy of the attention of the reader or hearer. In his *Principles of Success in Literature*, George Henry Lewis shows that there are other laws whose working sometimes tends to counteract this law of economy. Without entering upon a discussion of the question whether economy of attention is the only aim of the devices of style, I wish to note the fact that while Herbert Spencer treats of the result, I am considering the means by which that result is attained. If we grant that the result of an apt use of figures is economy of attention, my aim has been to point out the means by which such economy is gained, namely, by calling in the imagination to lighten the burdens of the intellect. We know that

“It is the heart, and not the brain,
That to the highest doth attain,”

and when the imagination and the understanding are yoke-fellows, increased work is done, and done with increased ease. When by the help of “thoughts that breathe, and words that burn,” plain facts are made to glow with the heat of the imagination, they become not, indeed, any truer, but far more effective; and in the presence of the imagination we find the differentia, the principle of the effectiveness of figurative speech.

HERBERT EVELETH GREENE.